


Coalition Bulletin

A publication of the Coalition fighting the Global War on Terrorism

Volume #20, February, 2005



They're overcoming barriers to protect one

U.S. and Azerbaijani troops work
together at Iraq's massive and critical
Haditha Dam

Australian troops lend medical services

Moldovan Eod Achievement

ANA Stands Guard in the South



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Cover photo: A forklift operator of 17 Port & Maritime Regiment, waiting to unload the ship.

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"I am happy for the people of Iraq and hope that today's elections will be another important step on the path of achieving stability, democracy and prosperity for our Iraqi brothers and sisters"

Hamed Karzai,
The president of the Islamic
Republic of Afghanistan

Editorial

In Afghanistan and Iraq, there is now an increased emphasis on embedded training.

Embedded trainers are members of Coalition armed forces who are attached to military units. They not only provide training to the members of the unit they are attached to, but also live under the same conditions as the soldiers.



Afghanistan and Iraq have both experienced abrupt regime change. Such regime change usually has a major and catastrophic impact upon the existing security forces, and this has occurred to varying degrees in both countries.

Successful nation building requires that there be appropriate security conditions in place. Good security is also necessary so that economic reconstruction and development can occur. That is why it is now so important to assist in establishing effective security forces in those two countries.

The international community can assist Afghanistan and Iraq to develop effective security forces by offering embedded trainers.

There are already training programmes in place for the recruits and leaders in the security forces of Afghanistan and Iraq. Recruit and NCO courses are being conducted, and officer academies are producing graduates, all with the assistance of staff from Coalition countries.

The attachment of embedded trainers, however, is the best way to transfer military skills at unit level. Trainers who are attached to a unit get to know all members in that unit. This assists the trainers in developing a full understanding of the skills of those they are working with and where the emphasis on training is required. Embedded trainers can also act as mentors for commanders and staff at all levels. Ideally, the embedded trainers should accompany their units on field deployments and operations.

Success in Afghanistan and Iraq now depends more and more on developing effective security forces, and the concept of embedded trainers offers the best way to achieve this.

Neville Reilly
Brigadier-General, New Zealand
Chairman, Public Awareness Working Group



More Norwegian troops to Afghanistan



Norway is planning to send another unit of Special Forces to Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Jan Petersen said this during a statement on Norwegian Foreign Policy in Parliament.

The unit comes in addition to the battalion already serving with the international stabilizing force ISAF.

Norway's engagement will also continue outside Kabul, particularly in the northern part of the country. However, the new unit will not serve with ISAF, but under direct US command. ^{UB}



The Republic of Macedonia sends new peacekeeping contingent to Afghanistan



TIRANA- A new Macedonian peacekeeping contingent left for Afghanistan on 18 February 2005. The contingent, comprising 19 Macedonian Army troops, will be under the command of German forces in Afghanistan within the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) for six months. ^{UB}



Romania offered to send an additional 100 troops to Iraq



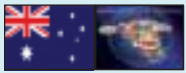
Romania offered to train officers in Iraq's new army, and said it was ready to send an additional 100 troops to Iraq. The new troops would help guard a United Nations mission in Iraq, Defense Ministry spokesman Lt. Col. Gelaedin Nezir told state news agency Rompres. He said they would be dispatched after consultations with coalition partners over where they would be based and what missions they would be assigned.

Nezir said Romania made the offer during a two-day meeting in the Romanian capital of army chiefs of staff from coalition countries.

The meeting in Bucharest focused on the security situations in Iraq. During the conference, which ended on Wednesday, 23 February 2005, Romania also offered to train 27 Iraqi officers at the National Defense University in Bucharest, he said.

More than 20 countries have combat and support forces in Iraq. Romania has 500 infantry and military police troops near Nasiriyah, in southern Iraq, and 200 more in Hillah, south of Baghdad. Meanwhile, Romania also offered to help transport Hungarian peacekeeping troops and materials to Afghanistan, the Defense Ministry said.

Romania's Defense Minister, Teodor Atanasiu, made the offer during a meeting with his Hungarian counterpart, Ferenc Juhasz, in Budapest. Romania has about 500 troops in Afghanistan as part of a NATO-led peacekeeping force, while Hungary has 125. ^{UB}



Australian troops lend medical services




they are flown to Germany.

“Certainly there are a lot of things we haven’t seen before. This is a huge experience, and we are learning a great deal from it,” said Maj. Marc Reissenweber, a critical care nurse.

Australian navy Lt. Diana Kumnick said, “Once we got used to the accents, it’s been great.”

To be part of the reconstruction of Iraq and to experience working side-by-side with U.S. troops has been stimulating and satisfying for the Australians. “

Australia is committed to the coalition, and we are happy to be here,” Paterson said.

The Australians are nearing the end of their six-month deployment here, and it has not been determined if there will be a replacement detachment. 

LOGISTICS SUPPORT AREA
ANACONDA, Balad, Iraq – A team of 20 Australian soldiers work alongside U.S. Airmen and Soldiers at the Air Force Theater Hospital treating injured people here. Australian air force, army and navy personnel have joined together, forming a tight-knit group to accomplish the mission with their American counterparts.

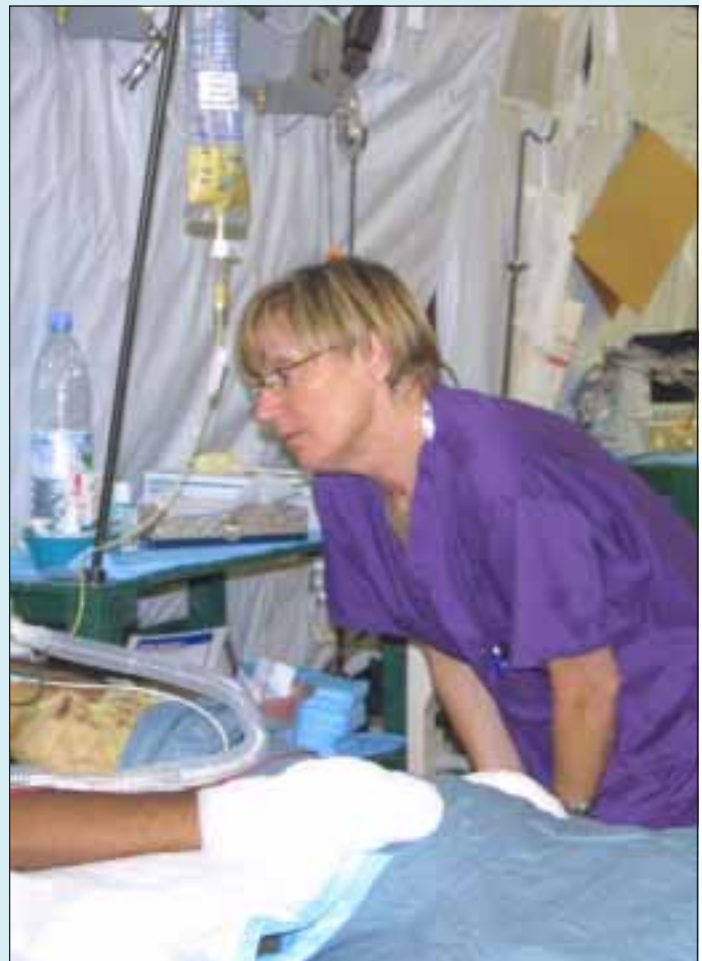
“Our mission is to integrate and provide expert medical and nursing services in support of coalition efforts ...we are here to help with the rebuilding process,” said Wing Commander Michael Paterson, officer-in-charge of the Australian Medical Detachment.

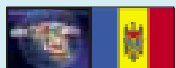
The Australian Defense Force is comprised of 50,000 service members. The culture here is different from what they are used to. In their home environment, they work generally as much smaller teams. The self-named Australian Medical Detachment consists of five doctors, four medical assistants and 11 nurses.

The ranks of the service members range from O-6 special doctors to an E-3 who works in the emergency room. For Paterson, who is a nurse on the civilian side, a lot of the work he performs is familiar, but he admits at times, it can be a struggle.

“All of us enjoy working here. It’s professionally challenging, but it’s been rewarding,” Paterson said. For Paterson, a typical day starts at 6:30 a.m. He manages patients, assists with emergencies and aids the chief nurse.

He is also in charge of the administration work for the detachment. Other personnel stabilize and process patients before





Moldovan EOD Achievement



The Moldavian EOD Team have displayed great enthusiasm and flexibility during the 1-33 Field Artillery Battalion Captured Enemy Ammunition (CEA) mission. They have conducted over 80 combat Explosive Ordnance Disposal missions in Tikrit North ASP.

Moldavian soldiers in close cooperation with US EOD and 1-33 Field Artillery Battalion soldiers disposed over 160000 unexploded ordnances (UXOs), which presented a great threat to the lives of Coalition Forces soldiers and local population of Iraq.

They were recognized for their hard work and dedication by 1-33 Field Artillery Battalion and US EOD soldiers who worked at Tikrit North ASP.

After deployment to Iraq, during TOA from EOD Team of the 774 EOD Company to Moldavian troops EOD Team Commander LTC Oleg Chiulcov and EOD Team Executive/Liaison Officer LTC Sergiu Casapciuc have organized and ensured the quality exchange of experience and information take place for the benefit of the mission.

At that time Moldavian EOD Team conducted joint US-Moldova UXO reconnaissance and disposal missions on FOB "Speicher" and vicinity.

During TOA period were discovered and disposed over 1500 of Different UXOs, about 100 of them were high category of risk munitions such as Cluster Bombs and Dispensers that were of the



The Moldavian EOD Team after fulfilling mission

high priority to the force protection of the FOB Speicher.

At FOB Summerall EOD Team, being off duty on maintenance and operational materials reload, responded to the mine incident at the FOB perimeter and conducted an engineer countermine recon at the road juncture, were several incidents of this origin occurred.

During this mission Maj Alexandru Cuciuc, 1st LT Andrey Pereu, 1st LT Gheorghe Cibotari

a and 1st LT Serghei Chilivnic discovered materials and ordnance remaining, which indicated possible IED emplacement and materials prepared for the other IED.

Also during this period Moldavian EOD Team has responded to different explosive ordnance discover and dispose tasks on FOB Summerall. On their first day of CEA mission on Tikrit North ASP, Moldavian soldiers distinguished them-

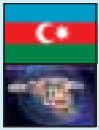
selves during the IED incident.

Together with Sergeant Elliott and Sergeant Meek they immediately responded to the incident location to ensure the safe extraction of the personnel from the damaged vehicle.

During the area recon conducted by LTC Sergiu Casapciuc and Sergeant Meek around the incident place- 3 IED emplaced within a couple of meters between each other were discovered and destroyed in place with no casualty to Coalition Forces personnel.

After clearing "Tikrit North" ASP Moldavian EOD was attached to the FOB "Speicher" where they conducted Explosive Ordnance reconnaissance and disposal on base and in vicinity. During this period were discovered and disposed over 20000 of Different UXOs.

Total number of UXOs discovered and disposed by Moldavian EOD during 6-month period has reached 182000.



They're overcoming barriers to protect one

U.S. and Azerbaijani troops work together at Iraq's massive and critical Haditha Dam

By Tony Perry, Times
Staff Writer

HADITHA DAM, Iraq — Even before Saddam Hussein's regime was toppled, U.S. military planners knew that this mammoth hydroelectric dam about 150 miles northwest of the capital was important to Iraq's future. To prevent retreating Iraqi troops from destroying the dam and flooding the region, Army Rangers seized the site on the night of April 1, 2003, a week before the fall of Baghdad, while warplanes hammered an Iraqi army unit nearby.

Nearly two years later, as U.S.-led forces battle an insurgency that has targeted much of the war-ravaged country's infrastructure, protecting the 10-story dam that provides electricity for a third of the country remains a priority.

The job is split between U.S. Marines and a company of soldiers from Azerbaijan. The Marines, notoriously tough in their evaluation of other military forces, say the Azerbaijanis have been impressive with their discipline, respect for authority and careful handling of their weapons. "If the Marines are an 8, the Azerbaijanis are at least a 4," said Sgt. Refugio Llamas, 38, of San Jose. "The Iraqis, well, they're not on the scale." The Marines, members of the 1st Battalion, 23rd Regiment, a reserve unit from Houston, provide security to the area's towns and roadways. The Azerbaijanis, in their crisp tan and green field uniforms and pith helmets, are responsible for security inside the dam and within its fenced perimeter.



One of the important daily duties, searching Iraqi dam workers' automobiles

Each day, the Azerbaijanis search Iraqi dam workers as they arrive and leave. Some of the workers have made their displeasure known, but the soldiers appear unmoved. "They don't like us," said Maj. Elkhon Shalbutov, the top Azerbaijani officer. "Our soldiers tell them nothing. We are not here to talk to Arabian people but to catch terrorists."

Hussein government. The structure was designed by Soviet engineers and built by 2,000 workers from Eastern Europe. After eight years, the first phase was completed in 1984. During construction, the course of the Euphrates River was altered and archeological sites and small villages were flooded. Before the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, American officials worried that Iraqi forces would blow up the dam to swamp the region and slow the advance of coalition troops. Officials now fear insurgents may strike Haditha to signal their determination and intimidate the populace.

No serious attempts to attack the dam have been made, though insurgents are active in the region, especially after a U.S.-led offensive in November drove many fighters out of Fallouja, 100 miles to the southeast.

Militants occasionally fire mortar shells at the dam, but the rounds fall hundreds of yards short.



A raid on an insurgent stronghold uncovered a diagram of the dam, its checkpoints and patrol routes. Marines from the 4th Platoon of the Small Craft Company patrols the Euphrates and the dam's immense reservoir, Lake Qadisiya, in small watercraft. They recently discovered several caches of weapons and explosives along the banks of the river, within striking distance of the dam.

Days later, a squad was ambushed by insurgents while on patrol. A lance corporal was killed and a captain lost an arm. The river unit is constantly on patrol while the Azerbaijanis staff the lookout towers.


The two military units live on opposite sides of the dam but share a chow hall and Internet room. The Azerbaijanis are polite but reserved, and there's little interaction between the two groups, as the chasm of language and culture appears to be too wide.

On the Marine side, signs of Texas are plentiful: a state flag above the dam and a "Texas Born, Texas Proud" sticker on the gun turret of a Humvee, among others. The Azerbaijanis watch their national equivalent of MTV. The Americans and Azerbaijanis must use stairs: 290 of them in the structure. Like much of the dam's internal operations, the elevators do not work.

Haditha shows the deterioration common to Iraqi infrastructure during the final years of Hussein's rule. Walls are moldy, some cracked and crumbling, and offices and workspaces smell of sulfur. By one account, the structure was functioning at 30% capacity when the Army Rangers descended and rounded up the workers.

A \$12-million improvement project was administered by Colorado-based CH2M Hill and overseen by the Army Corps of Engineers. Two turbines were rehabilitated and by last June, the dam was functioning at capacity for the first time since 1990, providing 660 megawatts of electricity.

The presence of the Azerbaijanis allows the Marines to launch missions in the countryside without worrying that insurgents might use their absence to attack the dam.


"No problem, we are here," said Azerbaijani Lt. Rashad Garayev. 



Ambassador's visit to CENTCOM

In January 2005 the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the US & Canada, His Excellency Mr. Baktybek Abdrisaev, visited USCENTCOM in Tampa, Florida. During his visit he met with leaders of USCENTCOM including Chief of Staff Major-General J. Castellaw and Coalition representatives. They discussed issues of further cooperation between Kyrgyz Republic and the Coalition in the war against terrorism.




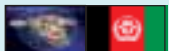
Kyrgyz Republic's Senior National Representative (SNR), General Oruzbayev, made a country presentation at the SNR's meeting chaired by the Norwegian Coalition Chairman, General Wang. The officer in Charge of the Coalition Village, US Major-General Richard Comer, also participated in that meeting. The meeting attendees were informed about the rich history of the country and economical reform currently underway in Kyrgyzstan. General Oruzbayev also briefed the meeting on the efforts and progress of the Kyrgyz Republic on issues including regional security and the war on terrorism. Then Ambassador Mr. Baktybek Abdrisaev presented, to participants, a book written by A. Akayev President of the Kyrgyz Republic named, "Thinking about future with optimism" published in the English language by Global Scholarly Publication (New-York city). In this book he stated the basic foreign policy for the country and the priorities of the Kyrgyz Republic. He underlined the topicality of the book for the Coalition countries during current antiterrorist activities and expressed his personnel thanks to the US CENTCOM and Coalition leadership for the chance to conduct the presentation in Tampa, of the second book from the president of the Kyrgyz Republic. A book with a dedicatory inscription was presented to US CENTCOM's Commander, General John Abizaid and attendees. The US CENTCOM library also received several copies of the Kyrgyz Republic President's book. 



ADB to develop solar energy for Afghanistan

MANILA - The Asian Development Bank (ADB) had approved a 750,000-dollar grant to develop solar energy technology for use in isolated rural areas in Afghanistan. The grant, financed by the British government, would demonstrate how solar energy could enhance the quality of life in poor, remote villages, which could not be connected to wider power grids, the ADB said in a statement issued from its headquarters in the Philippine capital. Most of Afghanistan's population have no access to modern energy sources like electricity and gas and are forced to rely on traditional fuels like firewood.

This depletes the country's forests, damaging the environment, the ADB said. However, the country has a great potential for solar power since the sun shines for about 300 days a year in Afghanistan, it said. The grant would be used to provide solar systems to communities on a pilot basis and to train 10 people from different ethnic groups as solar technicians at a training centre in India. Upon returning to Afghanistan, they would train 10 additional people from their communities. It was hoped that solar energy systems in Afghanistan could be used to provide lighting for literacy programs, provide water for clinics and to power water pumps and irrigation systems, the bank added. 



New Radios Improve ANA Communications and Enhance Military Operations

Story and Photos by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Mack Davis, Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan—The Afghan National Army can now talk freely—from Kandahar, to Kabul, to Herat—thanks to recently received communication equipment that replaced Soviet-era radios and systems.

Implementing the new communications system was a complex task. Attempting to set up and manage all the different aspects of the country-wide tactical communication network was even more difficult, requiring the procurement and deployment of various equipment types; installation into different environments; and training for administrators, operators and maintainers.

The Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan assigned that task to its communication section in Kabul. According to Sgt. 1st Class David Miller, an Army Reservist with the 3rd Battalion Signal Command, Anderson, Ind., and head of the OMC-A tactical communication section, “We are on track with what we have to complete. This is a challenge, but of a good sort. I thought I would be repairing radios here, and was surprised that I was honored to have such a high level of responsibility.” In the past the ANA relied on older, Soviet-style radio equipment, the R130 and the R123 for high frequency and very high frequency communication. They also used the PRC-77—a man-pack short-range VHF radio the United States deployed during the Vietnam War era. The difficulty was

finding someone to conduct the training and maintain the radios once deployed.

According to Capt. Stephen Robinson, Alabama Army National Guardsman and embedded trainer during Coalition Joint Task Force Phoenix II, the Romanian Army used to provide some communications training and repair at the ANA’s Pol-e-Charki site. “The biggest challenge for them was making daily repairs on the

World Communications Inc. won the contract to provide communication equipment and training to the Afghan Army. OMC-A chose four types of radios and repair part kits to give the army both long-range communication capabilities and squad-level abilities. The Datron RT7000 long-range high-frequency radio and the PRC-1099 man-portable HF radio will replace the R130 Soviet-style radios. These radios have the capability to communicate

After the equipment started arriving in Afghanistan it was time to begin the training process. Robert Fable is the project coordinator for Datron in Afghanistan. A retired Marine master sergeant in the communication field, Fable has worked for Datron for four years. Fable’s first visit to Afghanistan was in March 2004, when he set up Datron’s program. His first step was to develop administrator-level



Robert Fable, Datron World Communications Project Manager for Afghanistan, reviews component parts of a radio to members of the advanced component-level repair course at Pol-e-Charki

Soviet radios while trying to conduct training at the same time,” said Robinson. “Repair parts were almost non-existent, and the U.S. embedded trainers had never seen the radios before.” Mixing Afghan soldiers, U.S. trainers, Romanian instructors, several interpreters and Soviet radios presented some challenges.

The first mission for the OMC-A communications team was to find a company that had some experience with similar circumstances. They assembled a summary task list of equipment and initiated a bid process in the United States. U.S. company Datron World Communications Inc. States. U.S. company Datron

between Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif, Gardez and back to Central Corps in the Kabul area. The Datron PRC-1077 man-pack radio and the PRC-1070 hand-held radios will be very high frequency and will complement the U.S. PRC-77.


The ANA will use these radios for platoon and squad-level communications. Maj. Brad Letner, Materiel Officer for OMC-A, said the U.S. government has spent \$46.5 million dollars on radio and \$1.7 million on repair parts for the Afghan National Army. The British Government provided an additional \$6 million dollars. Each of the repair part packets was put together to give the radios a 10-year serviceability.

training, which focused on how to program the radios and properly deploy them for optimum use. Training included choosing appropriate antenna, setting up communication networks

and procedures for handling radio traffic. He also initiated operator-level training, primarily a non-technical approach to equipment use. At the same time Fable was trying to get his training program off the ground, the U.S. embedded trainers and the ANA were deploying throughout Afghanistan.

Said Fable, “During the day I would teach one-week classes to the ANA on how to use the different types of radios, and at night I’d meet with the ETTs to bring them up-to-date on the equipments’ capabilities.” One key difference between the older radios and the new Datron equipment was the new radios are digital.

Fable continued to work almost around the clock in Afghanistan until June 2004, training 100 ANA soldiers and many U.S. advisors. While "a lot of the Afghan men do not have a formal education," said Fable, "They are really sharp and pick up on the equipment. They have a genuine interest on learning the radios so they can do their jobs." Because of the tremendous growth in the Afghan Army, Fable has returned again to train the ANA soldiers. During the next five months, Fable will concentrate on intermediate and depot-level maintenance courses. To maintain the equipment throughout its lifespan, the Afghan Army and the Ministry of Defense will have to be able to troubleshoot and repair the Datron radios. Saad Forouk, Afghan Ministry of Defense Communication Officer, said, "I welcome the training we are receiving. It will be my office that will be responsible for the fault identification and advanced trouble repairs, and I want to learn all I can while the instructor is here."

The ANA has used the radios in Afghanistan since March 2004, allowing Fable to concentrate repair training on faults appearing in the field environment. He has prepared the ANA to sustain the equipment in the future, through train-the-trainer programs. While the Ministry of Defense will provide some future training, future communication mobile training teams from the United States will include classes on the Datron radio as part of their Signal Course. Whether calling in reports from Kandahar to the Central Corps in Kabul, or calling for additional troops when quelling a riot in Herat, the Afghan soldiers will have the equipment to enable their efforts to provide peace and security to the people of Afghanistan. 



German contribution to the built up and training of Iraqi Security Forces

Story by NAVY-DEUTCHLAND (GER) CDR Schult, Richard

In July 2004, a trilateral support programme was agreed between Germany (GER), United Arab Emirates (ARE) and Iraq (IRQ) as to provide training and equipment for Iraqi Security Forces. Based on this memorandum, Germany provided, inter alia, the Iraqi forces with 100 trucks (5-ton general purpose) including the

For 2005 a programme has been developed


- to form up an engineer unit, including the provision of the equipment, and
- to train some 200 key personnel of this unit especially in road construction and repair as well as bridge building.

The training for the battalion sized engineer unit will be based – again- on a trilateral

ambulance vehicles will be donated to Iraq on a bilateral basis. Germany also provides a 10 week training on the material for 20 Iraqi medical specialists, taking place in Germany before the mid of 2005.

In reaction to a direct Iraqi request, Germany has offered several training courses for up to 95 Iraqi Flag and Staff officers at German academies, half of them tailored to Iraqi demands, beginning in 2005. Since November 2004, Germany has offered NATO air transport for students from Iraq within Europe to the training centres.

So, Germany focuses its support on training outside Iraq and on donating equipment. All German bi- and trilateral support projects have been notified to NATO.

Germany is undertaking a considerable effort in stabilizing Iraq by helping to build up credible Iraqi Security Forces both by training and by provision of equipment. 



German engineers work together to construct a bridge

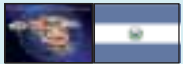
appropriate spare parts and tools. A total of 30 training personnel were sent to ARE. From 20 November to 22 December 2004, they had completed the training of 122 members of the Iraqi Security Forces („train the trainers”). Eventually, the complete equipment was handed over to the Iraqis for their own use.

All training activities were in full context with the NATO Training Mission Iraq (NTMI). In 2004, Germany additionally completed the training of 421 Iraqi detective police officers in ARE. With this positive experience of 2004 with respect to the excellent support provided by ARE possibilities are being examined to further enhance Iraqi Security Forces built up and training.

memorandum starting initially in ARE with basic lectures on certain equipment followed by advanced lectures for officers and specialists. GER will send about 60-70 trainers. Additionally the material of a field hospital including 30

Thirty ambulance vehicles for the field hospital donated by Germany to Iraq





El Salvador helping in Iraq



The departure ceremony at the Ilopango military airport

Relatives of the 380 Salvadoran soldiers making up the fourth troop contingent to be sent to Iraq bid farewell to their loved ones here with embraces, tears and prayers.

The departure ceremony took place at the Ilopango military airport on the outskirts of the capital after President Tony Saca announced that the group would leave on 10 February 2005 for a six-month deployment in the violence-plagued Middle Eastern country.

Saca was also on hand to present the new contingent with the national flag.

One of the soldiers, Raul Hernandez, 40, with his 14-month-old daughter Fatima in his arms, told EFE that he felt "happy."

"For the moment, I'm not afraid at all because we believe that we'll be protected by the hand of God and we know that if there are bad situations, he's always going to protect us," he said.

Hernandez said that "we're going on several missions, but mainly we're builders of peace. I'm proud because we're part of a battalion that has the privilege of being there. That was my wish and it has been fulfilled."

El Salvador is the only Latin American country with troops in Iraq, and in an interview published here last Friday in the

daily La Prensa Grafica, Saca said he had pledged to keep Salvadoran forces in that nation during a telephone conversation with U.S. President George W. Bush.

"He asked that we continue helping in Iraq. He said we have to allow the new authorities to be

installed there," Saca told the newspaper.

Saca, one of the few staunch supporters the Bush administration has in Latin America, said the U.S. leader thanked him for the help to date and praised the work of the 380 Salvadoran soldiers deployed in the strife-torn Middle Eastern nation.


El Salvador first sent troops to Iraq in August of 2003 and the group leaving Wednesday will be the fourth contingent on a six-month tour. One Salvadoran soldier has been killed in action in Iraq.

Last November, U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld flew to El Salvador to personally thank Saca for keeping troops in Iraq.

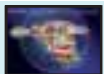
In 2003, the Salvadorans were part of a unit led by Spain that also included Dominican, Honduran and Nicaraguan troops. Madrid pulled out its troops after a new Socialist government took office last April, and Santo Domingo and Tegucigalpa quickly followed suit. Managua had dropped out earlier for financial reasons.

Earlier this month, Washington extended until late 2006 the Temporary Protected Status of roughly 250,000 Salvadoran immigrants whose remittances are crucial to their homeland's economy.

Known as TPS, the benefit may be conferred on people from countries plagued by natural disasters or armed conflicts and provides recipients with U.S. work permits and protection from deportation.

TPS was conferred on Salvadoran immigrants for a period of 18 months in March 2001 after their homeland suffered through two major earthquakes within the space of a month. This month's extension was the third and is valid through September 2006. 





ANA Stands Guard in the South



Soldiers Exercise Discipline, Restraint



Afghan soldiers fan out as they cross a valley in search of a rocket launch site

officers and noncommissioned officers, said Fenton. “They displayed a sense of collective and personal pride” in carrying out their duties.

While uniform appearance could improve, Afghan soldiers typically operate with equipment and accouterments donated by a variety of countries. Thus, there is oft great disparity in what individuals in a unit both wear and carry.

Shortfalls exist in some resource areas, such as communications (see related story, “New Radios Improve

said Fenton.

While concerned about the promptness of their pay, said Fenton, soldiers stated their concerns were “minor” given that Afghanistan has made significant progress in the past three years.

Soldiers would also like their families to accompany them in their permanent garrisons. However, they accept the fact that facilities don’t currently exist to accommodate their families, citing it as “their duty to suffer hardships while coalition soldiers risk their lives and serve away from their families to help Afghanistan,” said Fenton. Soldiers represent the “face” of Afghanistan, drawing from all ethnic groups

By U.S. Army Lt. Col. Susan H. Meisner, Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan
Photos by British Army Lt. Col. Andy Fenton

KABUL, Afghanistan—Almost 19,000 soldiers now serve in the Afghan National Army, with another 3,400 currently undergoing basic training. Permanent corps now stand in the four regions of Afghanistan—North (Mazar-e-Sharif), South (Kandahar), East (Gardez) and West (Herat)—and in Kabul. And plans for permanent brigade headquarters are also under way.

Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan Deputy Director of the Defense Operations Sector British Lt. Col. Andy Fenton recently completed an operational assessment of the southern region, assessing the operations and conduct of these soldiers. By all accounts, the soldiers serve nobly, stand ready and ably carry out their duties. “The soldiers,” said Fenton, “displayed a good standard of tactical skill and a high standard of situational awareness” on the operations I participated in.

They drew their experience from either prior, pre-ANA combat experience or from their ANA service. “They knew the area well and seemed to anticipate potential trouble,” he added. “And they acted proactively to situations, rather than reactively.” Fenton observed their positive reaction to potential contact with anti-coalition militants.


“In Bazar-e-Panjvay, they deployed quickly on seeing likely ACM withdrawing from the area and deployed weapon systems to cover the threat,” said Fenton. “They demonstrated discipline and restraint in not opening fire as enemy weapons could not be identified—lesser armies would certainly have engaged!”

During an operation to locate a missile launch position, the ANA soldiers “deployed well, maintained a good and disciplined formation and reacted swiftly to orders,” said Fenton. He was equally impressed with how well they interacted with the local residents. “Soldiers reacted quickly and in a positive manner” to orders from their



An Afghan soldier searches for an enemy rocket launch site

ANA Communications,”), but deployment of new radios will soon alleviate that problem. And despite logistical difficulties in promptly paying soldiers at some forward locations (regional pay systems are under way), “The morale of the soldiers encountered was very high, with all displaying a positive attitude towards their work and mission,”

and displaying pride in their service. And the “key to success in Regional Command South,” said Fenton, “is the spirit of the ANA and the resourcefulness of the Regional Command Advisory Group and Embedded Training Teams (the soldiers of Coalition Joint Task Force Phoenix) in making things work.” 



ISAF Snapshots




Balkan NATO hopefuls to send joint medical team to Afghanistan

Croatia, Albania and Macedonia - three Balkan states seeking to join NATO - said on 25 January 2005 at a meeting in Zagreb they would send a joint medical team to Afghanistan as part of NATO's ISAF mission. The decision was made by defence ministers in the presence of a representative of the US Defence Department, the Croatian Defence Ministry said.

The ministers adopted a joint statement at the end of the third meeting of the US-Adriatic Charter, confirming readiness further to strengthen cooperation in view of the realization of the common goal - full integration of Croatia, Albania and Macedonia into NATO.

"NATO representatives, including the secretary-general himself, have reaffirmed their support to the countries of the Charter on their road to the North Atlantic Alliance," Croatian Defence Minister Berislav Roncevic said. Roncevic said the medical team might be sent to Afghanistan in August. He said the signatories were agreed that further mutual cooperation was an important instrument for the advancement of regional security and cooperation.

They also supported Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro in their efforts to join NATO's Partnership for Peace program, announced further support for NATO's presence in the region, and reaffirmed their will to broaden cooperation in the global war on terror. 



Germany pledges to train 65,000 Afghan policemen


Germany will train and equip 65,000 Afghan policemen by the year 2007. According to a Bakhtar Information Agencies report, the German ambassador in Kabul, Dr Reinald Steck, said this at a news conference in the Police Academy.

He said this programme would be implemented so that Afghanistan would become self-sufficient in ensuring its security. He said Germany would spend 50m euros for this purpose.

The German ambassador said: We shall implement the Afghan police training programme and reconstruction of the police departments with the help of the Interior Ministry.



Christoph Bardo, the head of the German police project in Afghanistan, explained the programs, which included training and equipping the Afghan national police. The head of the German police project also mentioned the issue of training the border police. He said the building of the border police headquarters was funded by Germany and cost 2m euros. He also mentioned the training of the police in Badakhshan, Takhar and Konduz provinces under the supervision of German experts.

Germany had already supplied police equipment, motorcycles and criminal laboratories to the Interior Ministry, and had reconstructed the Police Academy. 



New Zealand to extend defense force deployment in Afghanistan



New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark announced on January 2005 the extension of New Zealand Defence Force deployment in Afghanistan.

"The deployment of the 120-strong New Zealand-led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Bamyán province will be extended for a further 12 months to September 2006," Clark said.

The prime minister also announced the deployment of New Zealand police, for the first time, to Bamyán province to help rebuild the local police force.

In addition, she said, two police officers will be deployed to assist with the training of Afghan police officers in Bamyán. The two officers will be deployed in March, with the mission lasting about nine months.

The New Zealand police will be based at the Bamyán Regional Police Training Center, one of seven such regional centers, Clark said.

She said New Zealand had also deployed a Military Liaison Officer to the United Nations Assistance Mission for one year. This officer is playing a valuable role as a strategic interface between the multinational forces in Afghanistan and the Afghan authorities.

The prime minister said that the New Zealand PRT had played an important role in promoting enrollment and participation in Afghan presidential elections last year.

"Now, parliamentary and provincial elections are scheduled for April 2005. This is the next major step in Afghanistan's progress towards full democratic government," Clark said.

New Zealand has deployed a 120-strong PRT in Bamyán province since August 2003.

Defense Minister Mark Burton has said New Zealand's PRT in Bamyán has received high praise from within Afghanistan and from other countries for its work. 